

Los Angeles Times

CALENDAR

Movie star.
Journeyman actor.
As Indiana Jones
goes on one last
adventure, a
Hollywood original
reflects on an
action-packed life.

THERE WILL NEVER BE ANOTHER HARRISON FORD

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GO METRO FOR
ART OFF THE
BEATEN PATH
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CHILI PEPPERS'
FLEA WON'T
SLOW DOWN
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'SLAVE STATE'
SHEDS LIGHT
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L.A.'S LATEST UNDERGROUND SCENE

METRO'S REGIONAL CONNECTOR PASSES THROUGH THREE NEW DOWNTOWN STATIONS ENLIVENED BY LOCAL ART. FOLLOW ALONG ON A TOUR OF THIS 'MAJOR PART OF THE TRANSIT EXPERIENCE.'



BY DEBORAH VANKIN

FOR YOUR NEXT ART OUTING, head underground. † The Los Angeles Metropolitan Transportation Authority debuted its Regional Connector Transit Project June 16, a \$1.8-billion undertaking that's been more than a decade in the making. It includes three new downtown L.A. subway stations — the Grand Avenue Arts/Bunker Hill, Historic Broadway and Little Tokyo/Arts District stops — each filled with ambitious new works of art. † Eight artists were commissioned by Metro Art to create permanent, site-specific installations for the stations: Andrea Bowers, Clare Rojas, Audrey Chan, Mark Steven Greenfield, Ann Hamilton, Clarence Williams, Mungo Thomson and Pearl C. Hsiung. There are also two wall-mounted light box installations in the Broadway and Grand Avenue stations, part of a rotating art program. The inaugural artists for those spaces are Ralph Gilbert and Samira Yamin. † “These are significant pieces, by established artists, that are

integrated into the overall architecture of the project but also will attract people on their own,” says Metro Art program Senior Director Zipporah Yamamoto. “People will stop and look at these artworks. It’s a major part of the transit experience — and the Los Angeles experience. It extends the downtown L.A. arts and culture experience into the station.”

Artists were chosen through an open competition — more than 1,200 people applied and arts professionals, both independent and from local cultural organizations such as the Broad museum and MOCA, judged the selection process. Artists were paid between \$35,000 and \$95,000, depending on the scale of their work, for projects produced over a seven-year period. Additional funds went toward the fabrication and installation of the artworks.

The Regional Connector makes it possible to ride direct from Azusa to Long Beach and East L.A. to Santa Monica.

Viewing these underground art museums will cost you \$1.75 (a subway ticket). The works on the subway platforms, in the station concourses and by the street-level entrances are large-scale and with strong points of view, some vibrant with color and others more muted or monochromatic. They’re made of durable materials, such as architectural glass or glass mosaics, meant to withstand dust from train wheels, gusts of wind and vibrations from passing trains.

“They require minimal maintenance,” Yamamoto says. “The works hold up and are meant to last.”

A week before the Regional Connector opened to the public, as train operators were conducting test runs and maintenance crews were sweeping and power-washing the subway platforms, The Times got an exclusive hard hat visit to the subway art.

So jump on the bandwagon — er, the Siemens P2000 light rail train car — for a recap.

FIRST STOP Little Tokyo/Arts District Station
Our tour began at the Little Tokyo/Arts

District Station, where Audrey Chan’s 14-panel porcelain enamel and steel mural, “Will Power Allegory,” flanks the tracks on either side of the train platform. The piece — 168 feet long and 14 feet high — presents different vignettes on each panel, populated by real people throughout the decades from city enclaves including Little Tokyo, the Arts District, Skid Row and the former Bronzeville area. Chan conducted three years of community outreach to locate these individuals; some of them are drawn from a Skid Row mural by Danny Park, owner of Skid Row People’s Market. Along the bottom, there’s a continuous procession of Angelenos marching, which binds the panels.

Surveying the work, Chan explains that it’s meant to “challenge historical narratives through allegories of power, place and identity.”

“I’m thinking about the legacy of the WPA and government-funded murals about the American scene,” Chan says. “I’m focusing on the resilience of communities that have been marginalized in so many ways, whether that’s the World War II incarceration of Japanese Americans, the Gabriellino-Tongva Tribe or the Skid Row community, which has faced displacement. Also, honoring the Asian American movement, so generations who are fighting to keep places like Little Tokyo alive.”

The work, inspired by Japanese woodblock prints, is intricately layered. It incorporates scans of mulberry bark paper to create a unifying, pulp-like background. Dozens of digital files went into Chan’s design, which a fabricator translated onto porcelain enamel.

Suddenly, a train car arrives



and the bottom portion of the artwork is obscured; but larger figures at the top of the work seem to rise above the train. This is strategic, Chan says. Sightlines were a challenge in making the piece, which is surrounded by architectural columns and signage, not to mention moving subway cars. But the work is meant to be interactive and experienced in the round.

“I’m imagining that people going in either direction on the train are joining that procession,” Chan says. “I wanted there to be different allegorical vignettes that you could go in and out of — and you’re as much a spectator as the one being viewed.”

Clare Rojas’ work appears in the station’s entrance pavilion, but because travel is never linear — and our subway car arrives — we move on to the next stop, promising to circle back to Rojas at the end.

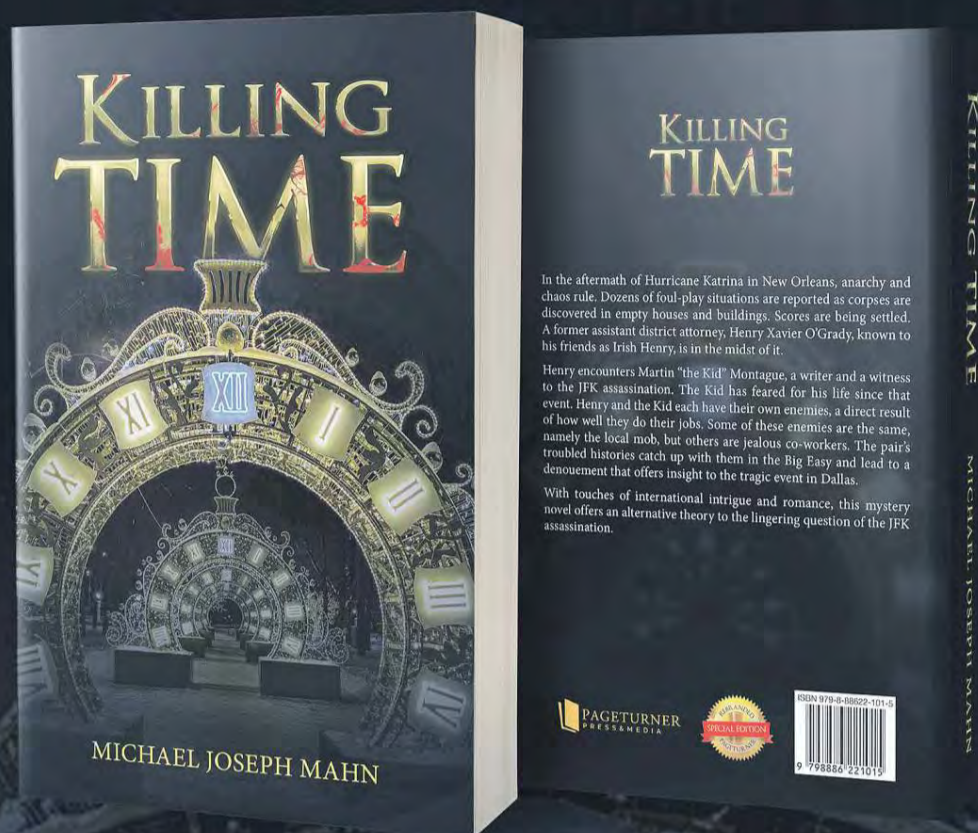
SECOND STOP Historic Broadway Station
Photographer Clarence Williams’ “Mi-

igrations” flanks the tracks at the Historic Broadway Station. The piece is a black-and-white photo essay, transferred to panels of porcelain enamel steel, addressing Black migration and other migrations to Los Angeles. One wall displays his images from New Orleans shortly before and after Hurricane Katrina. Williams, a former Los Angeles Times journalist who won the Pulitzer Prize for feature photography in 1998, shot the images after winning an Open Society Foundations fellowship, and some of the pictures ran in the Miami Herald.

One photo depicts a narrow boat floating down a flooded street; another shows a despondent-looking, shirtless man bicycling along a wrecked residential street, a weathered American flag whipping in

MICHAEL JOSEPH MAHN

KILLING TIME



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Michael Joseph Mahn has always been intrigued by the JFK tragedy and its connection to New Orleans. This fascination has inspired the author, attorney, and dog handler to pen the novel *Killing Time*. Set in New Orleans, at the wake of Hurricane Katrina, the book begins in the middle of rescue and recovery operations in the city.

The story features Irish Henry and the Kid, who work together to solve a crime and clear their names. As the former assistant district attorney, Irish Henry has amassed enemies that want nothing more than to see him fall. Meanwhile, the Kid, a prolific writer, has concrete proof of the true events behind the JFK assassination. This pair's troubled histories get them caught up in a tangled web of mystery, international intrigue, and a bit of romance, which comes to a head and offers insight to the tragic event in Dallas, in 1963.

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CHRISTINA HOUSE Los Angeles Times

the actor playing this guy, I wanted the reality of my age."

But first, in the film's opening scene, he had to play a younger Indy, which made the contrast of past and present more striking. Ford's face was de-aged through the miracle of artificial intelligence and Lucasfilm's trove of images from the earlier films, but "the mouth is my mouth, the eyes are my eyes," he said. "The voice is me talking in a higher register because age lowers the voice, and the body language I had to act. But he moves like I move and I remembered."

More important, he remembered what made an Indiana Jones film, even though it is a type that is increasingly rare.

"This is a family film like all the rest of them. They've been passed on generationally," he said. "Sharing these kinds of stories with your children is a great opportunity — not my children, because they know how the sausage is made — but other children."

Action without gore, threat without high body counts; this story, he said, "is about the Nazis being part of the space program, about a moment in time in America when things were shifting from black-and-white to shades of gray. Same time of civil rights and youth movement and it's not his time. Which is fun and a little uncomfortable. It's the missing middle," he says. "We are stuffed to the edges now. Not a lot of films are being made for a family to watch together."

FORD SAID he returned to our screens, large and small, not from fear of mortality or any desire for a personal renaissance but because he "ran into a vein of very good writing and I did not walk away from it. I embraced it and said, 'I want this.'"

Neither was his return to television — where he began his career in small parts on classic shows including "The Mod Squad," "Ironside" and "Love, American Style" — part of a larger strategy. "I hadn't even thought about it before," he said. "I don't know why we call it television except that that's where we show it. '1923' is built for the big screen. The genius is that they are able to jam all that magic into the small screen and still keep the majesty."

Ford was one of the last studio contract players; with his entrance into streaming via "Shrinking," his career has taken him through some of the biggest changes the entertainment industry has seen. Changes that have led to this year's summer of unrest, with the writers' strike entering its third month and the real possibility of actors following suit.

"There needs to be greater equity," said Ford. "This issue of not being able to discover what the profit schedule is and how to equitably share it is because of the secrecy, the lack of transparency. No one is speaking the same language. The streamers all have their own accounting system."

"I have thoughts about labor

unions in general," he added. "Especially for craft guilds. I understand craft guilds, but that includes the responsibility of the guilds to establish a pathway to journeymanhood. We don't do that anymore." He begins to continue, then stops. "You're going to get me into f—trouble. I think a lot about it," he said, "but a lot of it is my being raised Democrat. At my core, I believe in equity for labor and equality. But that's not what we're here for."

At least it's not what he's here for. As the rustic lantern standing just behind Ford's left shoulder reminds me, he's here to talk about "Dial of Destiny," a film that may or may not be setting up a potential spinoff for Indy's treasure-marketing goddaughter, Helena, played by Phoebe Waller-Bridge.

Making her action-hero debut beside Harrison Ford required as much if not more bravery than anything her character attempted, including stealing the titular dial from Indiana Jones. But "she threw herself into it," he said — without asking his advice. "I don't think she wanted to know how to do it. She wanted to just do it and suffer the consequences of not knowing how to do it, 'cause that's Helena's character and it's also Phoebe's character."

Not that he's much of an advice giver anyway. "My only advice ever is don't try to imitate anybody else's success. Figure out how to do it yourself, using what you naturally have."

When pressed about what he "naturally" has, Ford is surprisingly vague. He is historically, and currently, unabashed about his love for acting, and over the years directors and co-stars have consistently praised his preparedness, attention to detail and desire to be part of every level of the filmmaking process.

But, he said, when he was recently asked about his process for achieving a certain emotion in "Air Force One," he said he had no real answer. "I don't know. It happens to me. In the same way in Cannes, emotion happened. Other actors are making it happen to me, the script is helping get me where I'm going to go, but where it's going to go, I have no f—idea. I listen to whatever everybody says and then ... but I love what I do, I think that's a big part of it. There's no part of it I don't love."

"I think there's all kind of ways to be an actor. I don't know any of them except my own. I'm not playing a hero, I'm playing an archaeologist, I'm playing a doctor, I'm playing a Russian submarine captain."

And that may be the answer to the whole thing. Harrison Ford has always been in the business of making ordinary mortals look bad. Or, taking a more positive approach, of telling stories in which relatively ordinary people do extraordinary things: He is just your average, good-looking guy who finds himself forced, by all manner of events beyond his control, to fight stormtroopers, fascists, terrorists,

corrupt officials and evil pharmaceutical executives in order to save the world, his family or his reputation — and see justice done.

At home in a galaxy far, far away, Nazi-controlled Europe, a Russian submarine or current and future America, he has moved through space and time with the ease of "Doctor Who's" famous Time Lord, a character who has been played by 13 actors.

But there is only one Harrison Ford, and there will never be another like him. Setting aside his talent, Hollywood is no longer capable of creating a career like Ford's, a journeyman actor with a movie-star smile who loves what he does but understands that it is work.

Why has he decided to throw himself back into the business and make us all reconsider our own retirement plans? Because he can.

As for his next film, he may be Harrison Ford, but like every member of the Marvel universe he is bound to secrecy. "I had a good time, it's just a different kind of movie. I saw actors that I admire having real fun, chewing it up, and I said, 'Give me some of that. I'll have one of those, thank you, if there are any left.' And there was."

When it is pointed out to him that the Marvel gig means he will now be part of not one, not two, but three areas of Disneyland, he laughs. "There's an Avenger ride? Well, I'm not an Avenger. I play the president of the United States, so I probably won't be part of that."

He claims to have never gone on either the Indiana Jones ride — "Why would I do that? Would you go on a Mary McNamara ride?" (um, yes, repeatedly) — or Millennium Falcon: Smuggler's Run. He did show up, along with George Lucas, Billy Dee Williams and Mark Hamill, for the opening of Galaxy's Edge in 2019 but, he said, "When Bob Iger asked me if I wanted to go on the ride I said" — he growls in the negative. "He still looks at me sideways."

When I tell him the last time I was at Disneyland, Indiana Jones broke down twice while we were in line, he laughs. "Hey, I break down too sometimes."

I wonder if this is his way of saying we're done.

Ford admits that doing publicity, including this interview, is not his favorite part of the work. "I'm in it for the money, and I mean that in the best possible way," he said. "I want my films to succeed. For me and for all the people who work on them, even the people who put money in. But mostly I want the films to succeed for the audience. Because that is why we tell stories."

The he reached down and touched my phone, which was on a small table between us, recording the conversation. "Sorry," he said, pulling his hand back. "I thought it was mine. Oh, look at that," he said as the screen illuminated to show how long the interview had run. "Forty-five minutes. 'Did he touch it accidentally or did he just know?'" He laughed out loud.

"Be sure you write that down."

"MY ONLY advice ever is don't try to imitate anybody else's success," says Harrison Ford, photographed at West Hollywood's London Hotel.

KAREN ALLEN made her debut as Marion Ravenwood in 1981's "Indiana Jones and the Raiders of the Lost Ark," below, going toe-to-toe with the titular adventurer.



Lucasfilm Ltd.

Marion Ravenwood can really keep a secret

MARY McNAMARA
COLUMNIST

WHEN "Indiana Jones and the Dial of Destiny" premiered at the Cannes Film

Festival in May, no one was happier than Karen Allen.

(Warning: Spoilers ahead.)

She could finally answer the question she had been asked repeatedly by journalists, fans and friends for years: Yes, she and Marion Ravenwood were returning to the franchise they helped make famous.

Not that she was at Cannes; Disney was so determined to keep people guessing that it created a pre-Cannes poster that did not include Allen. "I was sworn to secrecy, which was torture," Allen said of the project, in theaters Friday, in a recent Zoom interview. "For almost two years, whenever anyone asked me if I was in the film or not, I had to come up with something to say, like, 'I could tell you, but then I'd have to kill you.'"

When the film's IMDb page was initially launched, Allen was not on it. "People kept consoling me," she said. "They'd be upset on my behalf, say things like, 'How could they not bring Marion back?' and I'd have to stand there like, 'Errrrr....' They're very serious about this."

"I had to do it for the last one ["Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull"]," she added, "but not for as long as this."

Allen, like Marion, is more than used to waiting for Indiana Jones. When she was cast in "Raiders of the Lost Ark," she said, she was told there would be three films and Marion would only be in the first. When the fourth, "Crystal Skull," took a leap forward in the narrative timeline, director Steven Spielberg brought Marion back into Indy's life. "I was thrilled and taken by surprise, especially when I found out they were going to marry," Allen said. "I always felt he was the love of her life."

Over the ensuing years, as the fifth film was developed, Allen had no idea if Marion would be part of the story. "George Lucas said it would be a more personal film and I didn't know what that would be."

The script Spielberg worked on for years had Marion more side-by-side with Indy, Allen said, but when he stepped aside and James Mangold came on board, "It was a whole new day. For a year and a half, I didn't know. I was just waiting."

"Then I saw the story that they decided to tell, and I was just very happy that at least in the very end, she came back and there was a reuniting of those characters."

Allen's scene, the film's last, took only a day and a half to shoot, but she went to London's Pinewood Studios a couple of weeks before to figure out hair and wardrobe. "I got to watch and meet James Mangold for the first time, hung out with Harrison a bit though he was working. It was very easy and he seemed so happy that I was there. It meant a lot to both of us to bring these two characters together. Bringing the first film back in the last moment of the film, it felt good, it felt right."

It certainly felt right to audience members in both Cannes and at the L.A. premiere of the film in June. Marion's appearance elicited emotional gasps and applause.

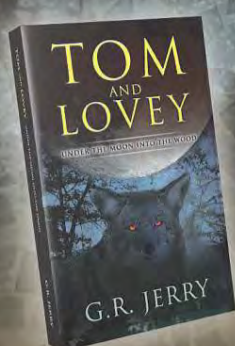
"I think [Lucas and Spielberg] created these indelible characters," Allen said of the couple's enduring popularity. "The stories are modern and kind of a throwback and Marion is his partner from the beginning."

Now Marion appears to have something of a new partner in Indy's goddaughter Helena, a.k.a. Wombat, played by Phoebe Waller-Bridge; she instigates Marion's return to Indy. Ford has said this is Indy's last hurrah, but many have speculated that "Dial of Destiny" sets up a Wombat spinoff. And who better to serve as her mentor than Marion? "I hadn't thought of that," Allen said, laughing. "That's a great idea. I'm in."

G. R. JERRY

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The Magical Eggs on Dragon's Lair

GINA SANO

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J. P. Dolan

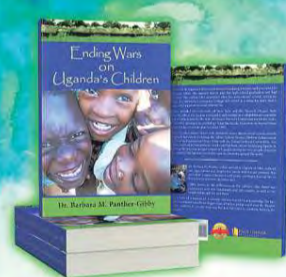
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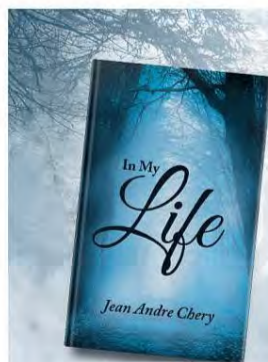
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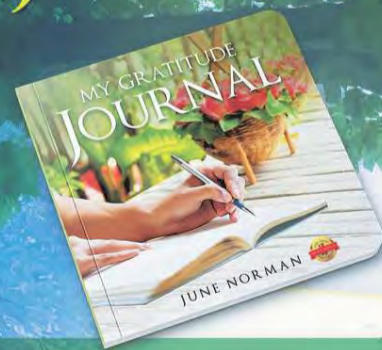
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